

Minutes of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee
University of Kentucky Board of Trustees
Thursday, April 23, 2026

The Human Resources and University Relations (HRUR) Committee of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees met on Thursday, April 23, 2026, in the Gatton Student Center, Harris Ballroom.

A. Call to Order

Brenda Gosney, chair of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and opened the session.

B. Roll Call

The following members of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee were in attendance: Brenda Gosney, David Figg, Paula Pope, Zach Stacy, Clark Williams and Elaine Wilson.

C. Approval of Minutes

Chair Gosney reported that the minutes for February 20, 2026, HRUR Committee meeting had been distributed and called for a motion for approval. Trustee Pope moved to approve the minutes and was seconded by Trustee Figg. Hearing no corrections, Chair Gosney called for a vote. The motion passed without dissent.

D. UK Invest for Employees

Chair Gosney introduced Vice President for Human Resources (HR) and Chief Human Resources Officer, Melissa Frederick, to provide an update on UK Invests for Employees.

Vice President Frederick began by noting that the University's employees remain central to its mission, emphasizing that faculty and staff support students, patients and the broader community, and that institutional success is directly tied to employee engagement and growth.

She provided an overview of UK Invests for Employees; a new benefit program modeled after the existing UK Invests for Students initiative. The program is designed to incentivize participation in activities that promote financial literacy, career development and well-being, while also equipping employees with skills to support long-term success.

Vice President Frederick explained that employees earn points through participation in training sessions and activities, which are then converted into monetary rewards deposited into a Fidelity brokerage account. She emphasized that while the financial incentive is valued by participants, the primary objective of the program is to support knowledge-building, lifelong learning and employee empowerment.

She reported that the program launched during the Spring 2026 semester, with approximately 4,580 employees identified as eligible to participate across both campus and healthcare populations. Participation in Phase I was intentionally limited to 500 employees to allow for refinement and evaluation of the program experience. Demand exceeded expectations, with all available spots filled within four hours of the initial announcement, demonstrating strong employee interest and engagement.

Vice President Frederick shared early participation outcomes, noting that as of April 20, 2026, 284 employees had completed at least one activity and received a financial incentive, with total earnings reaching \$23,100. Programming during Phase I focuses on two primary areas: career growth and financial well-being, with a mix of in-person, virtual and online sessions to provide flexibility and accessibility for employees.

She also provided examples of engagement, including strong attendance at optional sessions such as a financial literacy course held on a Friday evening, highlighting employees' commitment to professional and personal development. Vice President Frederick concluded by noting that feedback gathered from Phase I participants will inform future program expansion, with plans to increase participation and broaden offerings to include additional areas such as health, wellness and community engagement.

E. HR Technology Modernization and Contact Center Update

Vice President Fredrick introduced her colleague, Associate Vice President Frederick Martin to provide an update on HR technology modernization efforts and employee support services.

Mr. Martin reported that the University is currently undergoing the largest modernization of its HR infrastructure, anchored by the implementation of Workday and UKG, as well as the launch of a centralized HR Contact Center. He emphasized that these initiatives are guided by a consistent objective: improving the employee experience by making systems easier to use and more accessible.

He noted that UKG went live on March 29, 2026, followed by the Workday launch on April 1, 2026, as part of Project Blue Connect. The implementation was completed without disruption to patient care operations, establishing a unified system to replace multiple legacy platforms previously required for routine HR and administrative tasks.

Early adoption data indicated strong engagement, with approximately 89 percent of employees entering their schedules in UKG within the first several days of launch. Mr. Martin reported significant mobile usage, reflecting the system's accessibility and ease of use for employees managing schedules, timekeeping and leave requests.

Mr. Martin also highlighted the launch of the HR Contact Center, which serves as a single point of entry for employee inquiries related to payroll, benefits, leave and HR policy questions. The center utilizes a "one-door" model, allowing employees to submit inquiries via phone, email or web, all of which are routed through a centralized system for tracking and resolution.

As of April 20, 2026, 361 cases had been resolved, with only 14 requiring escalation beyond first-level support. Mr. Martin noted that the majority of inquiries are resolved quickly at the initial point of contact, improving response times and reducing complexity for employees.

He further explained that prior to the implementation of the contact center, HR business partners were spending a significant portion of their time addressing routine inquiries. The new model allows those resources to shift toward more strategic work, including talent development, organizational design and workforce planning.

Mr. Martin concluded by emphasizing that these investments represent a long-term commitment to improving the employee experience, enhancing operational efficiency and enabling data-driven decision-making across HR functions.

Chair Gosney opened the floor for questions. Hearing none, Chair Gosney turned to the next agenda item.

F. Advancing Kentucky Together Network Update

Chair Gosney introduced Vice President for University Relations, Jay Blanton, to provide an update on the Advancing Kentucky Together (AKT) Network.

Vice President Blanton focused on the University's efforts to expand artificial intelligence (AI) training and digital literacy across the institution and the Commonwealth. He reported that since March 21, 2026, nearly 280 individuals have participated in in-person training sessions, with an additional 330 individuals reached through virtual programming.

He noted that these sessions, delivered in partnership with a Microsoft training provider, introduce faculty and staff to tools such as Microsoft 365, Teams, SharePoint and Copilot, while emphasizing responsible AI use, data protection and privacy considerations.

Vice President Blanton also described more specialized training offerings, including scenario-based exercises focused on crisis communications, where participants utilize AI tools to respond to real-time, high-pressure situations requiring accuracy and speed.

Looking ahead, he reported that additional training sessions are planned for various campus groups, including the UK Police Department and academic leadership, with continued expansion anticipated throughout the summer and fall semesters.

Vice President Blanton further introduced the University's new Director of CATS AI, who will play a key role in advancing the institution's AI strategy, including governance, training and implementation efforts.

G. Land-Grant Engagement Update

Vice President Blanton then invited Vice President for Land-Grant Engagement and Dean of the Martin School College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Laura

Stephenson to provide an update on University outreach and engagement efforts across the Commonwealth.

Dr. Stephenson emphasized the University's land-grant mission and its commitment to working in partnership with communities to address critical needs across Kentucky. She described ongoing collaboration between Extension, UK HealthCare and other campus units as part of the Advancing Kentucky Together Network.

She highlighted a planned Western Kentucky bus tour, designed to provide faculty, staff and administrators with a deeper understanding of community partnerships and regional challenges. The multi-day tour will include site visits and engagements with local partners to explore initiatives related to healthcare, workforce development, agriculture, education and economic growth.

Dr. Stephenson noted that the tour will showcase the University's impact across multiple regions, while also identifying opportunities for expanded collaboration and community-driven solutions. She emphasized that these efforts are critical to aligning the University's teaching, research and service missions with the needs of the Commonwealth.

Following Dr. Stephenson's remarks, Chair Gosney asked if there were any questions for Vice President Blanton or Dr. Stevenson. There being no questions, the presentation concluded.

H. Other Business

Chair Gosney asked if there was any other business to discuss. Trustee Stacy made a motion requesting a formal update at the next HRUR Committee meeting regarding the status and anticipated employee impacts of the Integrate Blue initiative and the Shared Services Request for Proposals (RFP). Trustee Williams seconded the motion. Chair Gosney asked for discussion and then called for a vote. The motion passed without dissent. The meeting was adjourned at 1:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Hannah Nocket